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SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR AUGUST 29 UNSC OPEN DEBATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

¶1. (SBU) USUN is instructed to draw from the following points in its statement at the August 29 UNSC open debate on the Middle East.

Begin points.

-- Mr. President, on July 16, President Bush called for an international meeting this autumn of nations that support a two-state solution, reject violence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and commit to all previous agreements among the parties.

-- This meeting on a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will aim to support discussions and negotiations between the parties and achieve meaningful progress on the path to peace, Palestinian statehood, and an end to the conflict.

-- We believe the government of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad can be a partner for peace.

The international community has recognized this and responded by re-establishing diplomatic and economic ties with the Palestinian Authority and government led by President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad. As President Bush has said, the international community must work with the PA to develop a solid institutional and economic foundation for a future Palestinian state.

-- In that vein, Secretary Rice and Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad signed an \$80 million assistance package aimed at supporting efforts to reform and professionalize the Palestinian security forces. The Framework Agreement formalizes the intention of the United States to provide assistance to the Palestinian Authority to promote law and order by strengthening and reforming the Palestinian security sector. We believe the ability to provide security for the population is a core responsibility of any functioning government. The Rule of Law and security must be the foundation of any successful Palestinian government.

-- We believe that this assistance package will help improve the Palestinian Authority's capacity to deliver security for the Palestinian people and fight terrorism, build confidence between the parties, and ultimately help to meet the security needs of Palestinians and Israelis alike. The United States and the Palestinian Authority have worked together closely to design this program and will continue to cooperate in its implementation. This security assistance package is in addition to more than \$190 million in U.S. assistance to the Abbas/Fayyad government this year. We encourage others, particularly regional parties, to

step forward with additional support at this critical time.

-- We continue to call on all Palestinians to reject terror, and on the PA government to arrest terrorists, confiscate illegal weapons, and confront corruption. We remain deeply concerned by the continuing intransigence and illegal occupation of Gaza by Hamas, including recent moves to crackdown on freedom of speech there. We are very concerned about Hamas' provision of safe haven to fellow terrorist organizations operating in Gaza, and strongly condemn the continuing acts of terror, such as recurring indiscriminate rocket attacks, being conducted from Gaza against innocent civilians in Israel.

-- We welcome the August 6 and 28 meetings between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas, the second and third since late June. We strongly support direct dialogue between the parties. The United States remains committed to working with Israel and the Palestinians on day-to-day issues that affect the lives of Israelis and Palestinians as well as a political horizon for Palestinian statehood.

-- We have always said that bilateral dialogue between the parties is the key to realizing the two-state vision. We will continue to work with the parties and the international community to this end.

-- The development of a viable Palestinian economy and institutions remains crucial to the success and prosperity of a future Palestinian state. The United States looks forward to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in New York next month, and to the Quartet meeting where we expect to hear about Quartet Representative Tony Blair's travel to the region and his recommendations on the economic and institutional agenda.

-- We look forward to continued coordination and cooperation with the Palestinians, the international community and Quartet Representative Tony Blair to lay the foundation for President Bush's vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

LEBANON

-- Mr. President, we welcome the unanimous decision of the UN Security Council to extend UNIFIL's mandate for one year. We remain committed to a sovereign, democratic, and prosperous Lebanon and continue to call for the full implementation of all UNSC resolutions pertaining to Lebanon, including 1559, 1680, and 1701.

-- We remain deeply concerned by continuous, mounting evidence of illegal shipments of weapons into Lebanon. We call on all states, particularly Syria and Iran, to take steps to enforce the embargo against the shipment of weapons to Lebanon that do not have the approval of the Lebanese government or UNIFIL - an embargo that was unanimously approved by the Council in resolution 1701.

-- We applaud the peaceful and transparent parliamentary bi-elections in Lebanon this month.

-- We congratulate both the Lebanese people for exercising their democratic rights in the August 5 election and the announced winners of the elections, Camille Khoury and Mohammed Amine Itani. We also congratulate the Government of Lebanon for carrying out a transparent, non-violent election with minimal problems.

-- The Government of Lebanon has shown its ability to manage a fair, transparent election process in the face of heightened sensitivities due to the fact that these vacancies resulted from the brutal assassination of two Members of Parliament.

-- The people of Lebanon deserve to live in an

independent and free country without fear of violence and intimidation from those who would seek to undermine Lebanese democracy.

-- To that end, we look forward to a similarly free and fair, peaceful presidential election this fall that is held in accordance with Lebanon's constitution and is free of foreign intervention.

End points.
RICE